

natural gas industry, particularly in my area, the PA 10th District. A NATO Parliamentary Assembly report estimates that our shale will provide gas to supply the United States for the next 90 years at least.

If Americans have access to vast and affordable resources, why are we not utilizing them? The same NATO PA report emphasized that the U.S. could lead the world in oil and natural gas production.

It's time to build. Remove the roadblocks preventing construction of the job-creating, economy-boosting Keystone XL pipeline.

#### THE TUCKERS ON SEQUESTER CUTS

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, as the reckless across-the-board cuts in Federal spending known as "sequester" continue, I want to share a letter I received from my constituents, Leslie and Brian Tucker:

After being robbed by our home lender during the mortgage modification fiasco, my wife took a job with Jefferson County Public Schools and turned it into a career. She earned a certificate in childhood development and went to work at Duvalle Learning Center in Early Childhood Education as an assistant. After hard work, she rose to a lead teacher position.

I am a union steel worker with bad insurance. We have three children together—the youngest is 13 months, the oldest is 16 years old. My wife recently was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism and will require an expensive procedure to fix it.

The news of her sequester-caused layoff hit us especially hard, as it seems every time we get ahead a step, something knocks us back down.

Middle class life now requires two incomes. Without my wife's job, we will undoubtedly end up drawing some sort of assistance. If Congress can fix travel delays with the stroke of a pen, then helping my wife and the other teachers in Louisville being laid off should be a walk in the park.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to listen to the Tuckers and end sequestration.

#### SISTER MONSON

(Mr. STEWART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, like all Americans, my thoughts and prayers are extended to the people of Oklahoma this day.

I also rise to pay tribute to a modern-day heroine, Mrs. Frances J. Monson, who passed away last week. Frances, the wife of Thomas S. Monson, president of the Church Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, led a life full of service, love, and dedication to her family, friends, and her faith.

Her daughter Ann has remarked of Mrs. Monson:

Instead of looking for the recognition of the world, she has always received her rec-

ognition of worth from such things as the happy smile of a son or the outstretched hand of a grandchild.

In 1998, she was the recipient of the Continuum of Caring Humanitarian award by the Friends of St. Joseph Villa, but she never asked for a lot of attention. Instead, she turned to serve others with a compassionate and caring attitude. Her life was a shining example of one filled with faith, hope, and charity.

On a very personal note, President and Mrs. Monson have always been a source of inspiration to me and my family. I want to thank them for their great example of Godly love, which has served as a model for more than 14 million Mormons around the world. She will be greatly missed; but her devotion to her faith has touched so many, it will undoubtedly leave a lasting impression upon the world.

#### PAY AS YOU RATE ACT

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to join me as original cosponsors of the Pay As You Rate Act.

The Veterans Administration currently has more than 1 million backlog cases, and 70 percent of these have been under review for more than 125 days. For some veterans like those in southern Nevada, the average time to process a claim is close to 500 days. This is just unacceptable.

The Pay As You Rate Act will ensure that veterans receive at least some of their benefits in a more timely fashion.

Currently, the VA withholds benefit payments to veterans until their entire claim has been reviewed and processed. This is a serious problem, especially for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans whose average claim contains 8.5 separate components.

The Pay As You Rate Act will require the VA to pay veterans benefits as each element of the claim is reviewed rather than waiting until the entire package has been processed. This is a commonsense change which will put money in veterans' pockets sooner and also address the backlog.

□ 1230

#### NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Foster Care Month. All children deserve a safe, loving, and permanent home. Yet more than 400,000 of this Nation's children in foster care are still looking for such a place, a place where safe, supportive, and stable families can help nurture their dreams to reality.

Madam Speaker, our Nation can never forget these amazing young peo-

ple, and we should all thank the thousands of caregivers already answering the call and working tirelessly to help these children in need. But together, we must pledge to do more. Despite the best efforts of thousands, many foster youth struggle to find a permanent home. We are a Nation good enough and great enough to answer this call.

#### WHY ISN'T ANYONE TALKING ABOUT THE DEFICIT

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, the mantra for at least 4 years has been the Federal budget deficit, but for some reason, it is now rather quiet. The question we should be asking is: Why?

Could it be because last week the CBO readjusted its projections and has determined that the government's annual deficit is shrinking faster than expected—actually shrinking? The deficit which topped 10 percent of the gross domestic product in 2009 and exceeded \$1 trillion a year is now expected to shrink to \$642 billion this fiscal year. That's \$200 billion lower than expected. The deficit is expected to be 2.1 percent of the GDP by 2015, a rate that is deemed manageable by the CBO. So why aren't we talking about this?

Just so we're clear, the \$200 billion is not due to the sequestration. Shouldn't we be saying something is going right? Could it just be the implementation of the Obama policies may be working? Imagine if we implemented it all.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about it so the people can clearly hear.

#### RECOGNIZING MEMORIAL DAY

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the courage and the bravery of those servicemen and -women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our most cherished principles.

This Memorial Day, we honor their lives in the name of freedom, and we owe them our deepest respect and gratitude. But even more, we owe them our allegiance to the principles for which they have given so much. We reflect upon these ideals, as we have on this day for the past 145 years.

Service to one's country is a value that has been deeply ingrained in American heritage and—especially in my home State of Georgia—you would be hard-pressed to find someone who did not either personally serve or has a family member or friend who has served.

My home district has recently lost 37 of these unforgettable heroes, and it is in their memory that I would like to give my deepest regards to the servicemembers who have laid down their